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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3722
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RUCPDOC/USDOC WASHDC PRIORITY
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RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
RHMMUNA/HQ USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
RHMMHBA/COMPACFLT PEARL HARBOR HI//N541// PRIORITY
RHMFIUU/HQ PACAF HICKAM AFB HI//CC/PA// PRIORITY
RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 1144
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 4704
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7063
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1662
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 3129
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 4304
RHEHAAA/NSC WASHDC

UNCLAS TOKYO 002244

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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: OITP KMDR KPAO JA
SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION - NORTH-SOUTH KOREA CONFIDENCE
BUILDING MEASURES - TOKYO

LEAD STORIES: Most Friday morning papers gave top play to the hostage-taking incident in Aichi Prefecture, central Japan, in which a gunman shot two police officers and two of his children. One of the policemen has died and a woman is still being held hostage.

¶1. "Connection of Two Koreas by Rail: Reconciliation Alone Cannot Lead to North's Denuclearization" The top-circulation, moderate Yomiuri editorialized (5/18): "North and South Korea ran a train across the heavily militarized border Thursday for the first time in nearly 50 years. The ROK had strongly been promoting the reconnection of the two Koreas by rail as one of the projects to symbolize inter-Korea reconciliation since the ROK-DPRK summit in 2000. This trial run, however, does not mean that the reality of the military confrontation and mutual distrust between the two Koreas has ended. It remains unclear whether Seoul's proposal for a regular rail connection will be realized. It should be noted that the South is trying to resume economic support to the North, which was suspended following Pyongyang's test launches of ballistic missiles in July 2006.... Even though the April deadline has come and gone, North Korea has yet to implement the 'initial steps' for denuclearization on the grounds that its funds in a Macau bank, frozen under US sanctions, have not been returned.... The DPRK's failure to implement the initial steps also makes it uncertain whether it will carry out the 'next steps' agreed to at the six-party talks. Given the situation, there are concerns that financial aid from Seoul could further delay the North's denuclearization."

SCHIEFFER